(b) The Bangladesh Government have assured us that their position has not changed.

Support for Independence of Tibet

1982. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some members of the Union Government have supported independence of Tibet; and

(b) if so, what is Governments' policy towards Tibet ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) and (b) The Government of India's stand on Tibet remains consistent and well-known. Tibet is recognised as an autonomous region of China.

Visit of a Team of Amnesty International to Punjab

1983. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a U.S. Congress delegation visited New Delhi in the first week of January, 1990 urging Government to invite a team of Amnesty International to visit Punjab;

(b) if so, what was the specific demand of the delegation, indicating the position of the Amenesty team proposed to be sent to Punjab by the said delegation; and

(c) what is Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) & (c) Congressman Solarz, Chairman of the Home Sub-Committee on the Asia and Pacific, visited India during the first week of January, 1990. He advised P.M. and me that the Indian Government's denial of access to Amnesty International was generating adverse reactions against India in the US Congress and enquired about the new Government's thinking on this issue. Congressman Solarz was informed that the Government was deeply committed to human rights and that the policy relating to Amnesty International was under consideration.

Activities of Anand Margis in West Bengal

1984. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the activities of Anand Margis in West Bengal;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto, including that to the activities of their political wing 'Anand Bengali' ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MUFTI MOHAMMAD SAYEED): (a) to (c) The State Government of West Bengal has sent a report regarding certain illegal activities of the Anand Margis and its front organisations. In Mach, 1989 the State Government officials, while undertaking the demolition of an unauthorised construction raised by the Anand Margis on the forest land and Bansgarh Mouza, PS Jhalda in the district of Purulia, detected a secret hide-out of Anand Margis where unauthorised fire-arms were also stored. Large quantity of arms were recovered and cases under Arms Act were registered. Following this, raids were conducted in the Anandnagar Ashram premises and from there also incriminating

materials like wireless transmission sets and explosives were recovered by the police. The Anand Margis have also alleged by indulged in land grabbing in and around Anand Nagar. (Resentment among the local people has been growing due to the aggressive land grabbing exercises by Anand Margis and their other unlawful activities). Occasionally this has led to clashes between the Margis and the local people.

The Central Government is keeping a watch on the situation in close cooperation with the State Government of West Bengal.

US-Soviet Talks on strategic Nuclear Arms Treaty

1985. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the U.S.-Soviet Talks held in Moscow around February 8, 1990, relating to a Strategic Nuclear Arms Treaty;

(b) if so, what progress has so far been made towards nuclear disarmament; and

(c) whether any negotiations have taken place for achieving a nuclear weapon-free world as contemplated in the proposals mooted at the U.N. by the former Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) and (b) The Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union and the Secretary of State of the U.S.A. met in Moscow from February 7—9, 1990. During their talks they were able to resolve many outstanding issues connected with the START negotiations which are going on in Geneva between USA and the Soviet Union. The aim of the START negotiations, accepted by both sides, is to bring about a reduction of roughly 50% of their strategic nuclear weapons which include land based Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles, Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles and intercontinental bombers capable of delivering nuclear bombs and nuclear-tipped cruise missiles. Both sides have declared after the Moscow talks that they have made substantial progress and they hope to achieve agreement in principle on all the outstanding issues by June 1990 when a summit meeting is scheduled between the two countries.

(c) No, Sir.

Construction of Bridges over river Kalisindh and Parvati in Kota

1986. SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the progress of the construction of two bridges on the river Kalisindh and Parvati in Kota District of Rajasthan sanctioned by Government recently; and

(b) by when the construction of these bridges is likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN): (a) and (b) The State Government have proposed the construction of the two bridges under the Central scheme of assisting State Governments in construction of roads and bridges of economic and Inter-State importance. Central Government have not yet sanctioned these schemes and it is too early to say when these two bridges would be completed.